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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
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10/632,017

07/31/2003

Olaf Abels

71084

9343

23872 7590 02/05/2007
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EXAMINER

GARCIA, ERNESTO

ART UNIT

PAPER NUMBER

3679

MAIL DATE

DELIVERY MODE

02/05/2007

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Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.



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10/632 017

APPLICATION NO./ CONTROL NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR / PATENT IN REEXAMINATION	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.
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10/632,017

EXAMINER

ART UNIT	PAPER
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20070130

DATE MAILED:

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Commissioner for Patents

The reply brief filed on January 11, 2007 is acknowledged.

Daniel P. Stodola

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ATTORNEY DOCKET NO: 71084

IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

Applicant : ABELS et al.
Serial No : 10/632,017
Confirm. No : 9343
Filed : July 31, 2003
For : BALL-AND-SOCKET JOINT
Art Unit : 3679
Examiner : Ernesto Garcia
Dated : January 11, 2007

Commissioner for Patents
P.O. Box 1450
Alexandria, VA 22313-1450

Noted
2/2/07
DPG

REPLY BRIEF

In response to the Examiner's Answer of November 16, 2006 Applicant hereby replies.

102(b) rejection - Yao

The Examiner's Answer states that the sliding ring A1 as identified by the Examiner, which is embedded in the sealing bellows, rotates along with the sealing bellows. However, Yao fails to disclose a sliding ring that is mounted to slide in a ball race that is fixed to the ball pivot. In the present invention, the sliding ring receives the pivot-side edge of the sealing bellows (Claim 1, line 8: "a sliding ring receiving said pivot-side edge area of said sealing bellows"). The sliding ring of the present invention slides within the ball race. This is a different approach than that of Yao. In Yao, the embedded element (A1) fails to slide in the ring collar 13 since the embedded element (A1) is surrounded by the sealing bellows 8. Even